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Approved For Release 2005/11/23 : CIA-RDP80B01495R001100100006-6

25X1

The LASERFAX ITS Issue

History:

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When it was generally appreciated that [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] would find the Intelligence Community
with no means for rapid transmission of [redacted]
[redacted] crisis related preliminary read out imagery the DDI
took a hand in examining this question. This resulted
in the LASERFAX proposal being approved jointly by the 25X1
DDI and the DDS&T and presented to the DCI. Through
the IC Staff he subsequently decided that this proposal
should be a Community answer to the lack of a [redacted] 25X1
rapid system. In his letter last spring he so informed
the Community. None of the objective facts have
changed since then, as pointed out very well [redacted]
in his various recent papers on the subject. He has
effectively refuted the "fewer" stations case in the Hall
letter of August and the more recent "technical" objections
by [redacted]

In my view the question goes beyond the objective
situation and cuts to the heart of the DCI--the concept
and viability of the role in the first instance and his
ability and/or willingness to stand by his decisions in
the second. The issue is therefore heavily political and
must be addressed in large part in those terms.

The Specific Issues:

Within the context of the political nature of the
issue the following are specific points that also must
be addressed:

--is the difference in cost between ten and four
stations significant enough to leave out State,
the White House and NSA, with all the inherent
political overtones this could raise?

--can we in the intelligence business risk a
grossly reduced system, or another system which
will not be ready until after IOC or as I suspect
some wish, no system at all given how our masters

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in the Executive and/or Legislative branches might react upon learning that we spent X millions on a near real time imagery system, bringing us imagery in under two hours but were satisfied with a local courier delivery system that can take that long to get the imagery from the ground site to the customer?

--given an emasculation or abolition of an ITS now, could we risk a DCI attending a hastily called WSAG without time to wait for the courier only to find when he arrives at the meeting that his military compatriots had the imagery because they were able to arrange for helicopter delivery?

--granting some validity of the ASD(I) arguments, are the cost/risk factors in balance?

--what effect will no imagery transmission system or a sharply reduced one have on the various analysts in the Community? Will it not have a polarizing effect if some key players are left out or if different organizations are left to their own devices and arrange for different delivery systems getting the "NRT" product to different analysts hours apart?

Quo Vadis?

This could be a flood gate issue if the DCI goes back on his earlier decision and accedes to ASD(I) wishes. It could also erode confidence in the IC Staff's role since under [redacted] vigorous leadership they took the DDI/DDS&T proposal and made it a Community answer to a serious vacuum.

Lastly it could place production analysts and crisis managers in an unpleasant "Johnny at the rat hole" situation--the organization with its own best method of getting the first piece of imagery trying to look good at the expense of the others. And we do not have helicopters.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The Operations Center

October 9, 1975

NOTE FOR: ADDI

Dear Paul,

The attached is the general strategy
I intend to follow at today's meeting with
Knoche et al.



Vincent J. Heyman
Chief, CIA Operations Center

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

PVW

*file: Elmaguy
Transmission*

Hank Knoche hastily conveyed a meeting to discuss LASERFAX. With no obvious DDI rep at hand, I concurred in SSGs suggestion that Vince should attend.

Here are notes he prepared in advance of the meeting.



Date 9 October 1975

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